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Egypt/Pakistan

Two great victories in one night

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As people around the world celebrated the fall of Mubarak, the Pakistan working class had another cause for celebration too. Farooq Tariq reports.

Egypt: A Great Victory.

After 18 days of very brave protests and people's uprising in the streets of Cairo, Alexandria and all over Egypt, Husni Mubarak, the dictator who oppressed and plundered the people and the country for more than thirty years, was forced to resign. It is a great victory of peoples power. Till last night, the dictator was not ready to go away, however, within 24 hours, the massive pressure of the movement, much greater than drone attacks, bullets and suicidal attacks, he had to go.

We salute the heroic people of Egypt in this hour of their great victory. It is the opening of a new chapter in the history of peoples power.

We congratulate the heroic struggle of the youth who came out in the streets and compelled the dictator to resign. It was them that made the history.

The people of the whole world join hands with the Egyptian people in celebrating this great victory. At the same time we hope the revolutionary people shall carry forward the great struggle so that the military which has taken over will not be allowed to take away this great victory from their hands.

Labour Party Pakistan extends revolutionary greetings and solidarity to the people of Egypt and assures them that we shall be with you in the great struggle for a people's Egypt.

Pakistan: a great victory of PIA workers

The four days of heroic struggle by the PIA workers made the Pakistan Peoples Party government had to accept all the demands of the striking workers. [1] Over 250 flights were cancelled during the four days strike of PIA workers. It was a struggle by PIA workers to save PIA and their jobs.

The victory came with blood, sweat and tears of many thousands of workers including women workers of PIA. The brutal attack of the police this evening in Karachi with the help of the thugs of PPP Senator Abidy (misnamed as Peoples Unity) on PIA striking workers was one of the last act of desperation to defeat the strike.

The four day of strike of PIA workers was a classical example of unity among the different sections of one institution. It was this great unity of manual workers, engineers, pilots, air hostesses, booking officers, and administrative officers that defeated the PPP government strategy to run the PIA. All the efforts to split the movement by PPP government by creating new "Peoples Unity" were foiled by the sheer pressure of the real unity among the working class.

The Managing Director is gone. He was a professional pilot and his only qualification to become the manging director

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of PIA was his association with President Zardari. He acted as the hench man of the PPP leadership. If the Turkish deal had not been challenged by the workers, the PIA would have been lost for ever.

And what a hypocrisy of Ahmad Mukhtar, the defense minister while accepting the demands of the workers, he told the journalist that Turkish deal was brought into notice of defense ministry. He was the one who said the floor of the assembly that this is deal that PIA will benefit.

Why does the PPP always take bad decisions and then, under the immense power of the workers, change their mind? The answer is very simple. "If it works, we will take the benefit otherwise we will be flexible" is the philosophy behind many such anti-workers anti-people decisions.

The PPP government took back the decision of privatization of coal and gas fields in Sindh after massive protests, it reinstated the judges when there was a mass movement that was not ready to back down till the acceptance of the demands.

The example of Karachi Electric Supply Corporation (KESC) 4000 workers was an another incident where PPP and MQM leadership were making new lists of their cronies to give them jobs once these 4000 gone. Then the occupation of the offices forced all the parties to change their mind and withdrew their decision of termination.

ON PIA workers strike, no political party apart from Labour Party Pakistan took any practical step to show their solidarity with them. All the religious parties were making hue and cry of their "anti Americanism" while forgetting the real fight of the workers against the friends of the Americans. When LPP activists went for Gherao of PIA headquarters in Lahore yesterday, a massive police presence was ensured by the local administration to harass the activists. It was the only demonstration in Pakistan by any political party in solidarity with the striking workers.

This victory will set a new mood among the working class in Pakistan. It is another victory of peaceful mass militant struggle. IT is reply to those who argue for bomb blasts, suicidal attacks, drone attacks and other military means to achieve their goals.

The victory of PIA workers will change the course of history in Pakistan as well. It is not an isolated incident. It has won the minds and souls of millions in Pakistan. It will set the trends of future struggle. It will be even more difficult for PPP government to implement on any portion of their neo liberal agenda of privatisation and other aspects.

[1] Employees of the national airline, Pakistan International Airlines had been on strike since Tuesday 8th February against a code-sharing agreement with the Turkish airlines that would have lost a number of profitable European and American destinations for the PIA.